

More than 98 percent of the territorial residents are racial or ethnic minorities like me, a fact that cannot be a mere coincidence in our continuing disenfranchisement, which extends well past the century mark.

Our Nation's Founders never intended our country to work this way. Alexander Hamilton, as a young man, arrived in New York after spending his formative years in my home on St. Croix. He and others risked their lives to reject colonialism. They wanted no part of it. They understood that governments derive their just powers from the consent of those governed.

America has, from its inception, included U.S. territories. The original understanding was that the Constitution provided a promise of full political participation to each resident of a territory through eventual statehood. Until that happened, the Constitution was understood to fully protect their rights.

That promise was broken after the United States began acquiring island territories in 1898. During that time, in a series of decisions known collectively as the insular cases, the Supreme Court invented an unprecedented new category of unincorporated territories whose residents were not on a path to statehood. Which territories the Court determined were unincorporated turned largely on the Justices at the time's view of the people who lived there—people they labeled in those court opinions as half-civilized, savages, alien races, ignorant, and lawless—people like Alexander Hamilton; Camille Pissarro, the founder of Impressionism; Edward Wilmot Blyden, the founder of Pan-Africanism; and me—lawless, savage.

While other racist Supreme Court decisions from that same era by those same Justices—such as *Plessy v. Ferguson*—have long been overturned, the insular cases remain. The last three administrations—Bush, Obama, Trump—have all upheld and fought for these same cases. Indeed, our own House Parliamentarian uses the insular cases to deny the people who live in the territories and their representatives full voting rights on this floor.

The ramifications go well beyond just voting. We do pay billions in Federal taxes, yet residents of the U.S. territories are denied and limited access to Federal programs and support. Otherwise, eligible citizens in the territories are denied SSI, leaving our most vulnerable seniors and disabled to fend for themselves. Federal programs like Medicaid, SNAP, child tax credit, and the earned income tax credit are capped or denied altogether.

The Supreme Court will soon tackle questions of Federal discrimination against citizens in the territories in *United States v. Vaello-Madero*, a case where the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit ruled unconstitutional the arbitrary denial of SSI benefits in Puerto Rico.

The Justice Department should not continue defending this case. The

House should not continue to defend and utilize the insular cases to deny people living in the territories basic rights.

Making sure that 3.5 million U.S. citizens can vote is not a partisan issue. Of my four other colleagues in the territories, two are Democrats and two are Republicans. We are not a monolithic people.

Our country has been given a collective opportunity to ask what America is and who we are as a people. These questions extend to America's responsibilities to citizens living in the territories.

Please reject the insular cases.

SUMMER CAMPS SHOULD REOPEN WITHOUT MASKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, this year, due to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines restricting outdoor activities, many children will be stuck inside when they should be outdoors in the sunlight playing, learning new skills, making friends, and enjoying their childhoods. This is not only important for their mental health but also their physical health and enhancing their immune system.

And it is even more critically important in those States which have still not reopened their schools fully to in-person learning, despite all scientific evidence to the contrary.

Yesterday, The New York Times reported that the CDC had hugely exaggerated their guidelines by saying that less than 10 percent of COVID-19 transmission occurs outdoors, and that the actual estimate of outdoor transmission is somewhere between 0.1 percent to 1 percent.

This misleading guidance from the CDC has led to confusion, increased hesitancy to view outdoor activities as safe, and many summer camps have been forced to close their doors again for yet another year.

We have known for quite some time that the risk of transmitting COVID-19 outdoors is exceedingly small. In Iowa, there was not a requirement to wear masks outdoors, even though physical separation and maintaining small group size was encouraged.

Due to shelter-at-home orders, the numbers of cases of youth depression, anxiety, attempted suicides, suicides, increased drug use, and hospitalizations have continued to increase, despite the overall decrease in new COVID cases, hospitalizations, and mortality rates.

A staggering report from the CDC found that from March to October of 2020, mental health emergency department visits from adolescents had increased 31 percent from the same time in 2019.

With the good news related to rapidly approaching community immunity

from the pandemic and the relaxing of a number of protocols and controls, the CDC's newly released guidelines for summer camps is both overly cautious, rigid, and unscientific.

Many of us have fond memories of spending time with friends and family, including a week at summer camp. Summer camps are a staple of childhood and adolescence.

More than 6 million children attend the day and overnight summer camps in any given year. Denying children their ability to attend these camps and the opportunity to make a friend, learn independence, life skills, learn teamwork, build self-esteem, and continue their education beyond the school year is atrocious.

With over 12,000 summer camps across the country, there are plenty of opportunities for our children to grow, learn, and play.

Iowa is home to several great camps, including Forest Lake Baptist Camp in my home county; Hertko Hollow, a camp for children with diabetes; and Camp Courageous, a camp specifically for children with disabilities.

Summer camps also provide employment for over 1.5 million Americans every year. This represents a great opportunity for high school students and adults to have great experiences outdoors while earning an income.

As a doctor, former president of the Iowa Medical Society, and former director of the Iowa Department of Public Health, I have addressed the severity of COVID-19 and have been a strong and consistent advocate for all three of the safe and effective vaccines developed through Operation Warp Speed, and, in fact, just finished attending and administering vaccines at clinics in all 24 counties in my district.

Just a few days ago, the Pfizer vaccine was given emergency use authorization to be administered to children 12 to 15 years old. It has been well-documented that children are at exceedingly low levels of risk for serious illness and that they do not transmit the virus.

COVID-19 deaths were 277 through the end of April. To put this in perspective, the CDC estimates around 600 children died of influenza in the 2017–2018 season; 358 died during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic; and each year, more than 700 children die from drowning.

We can see the light at the end of this pandemic tunnel, and as the number of Americans who are vaccinated continues to grow, coupled with those who have natural immunity from having the disease, I expect to see a return to normalcy and a return to pre-pandemic life. A return to normal includes allowing our kids to be kids.

I am hopeful that we will be able to send our children to summer camp in the coming weeks so that they can have the experience and opportunities that they deserve.

Time is extraordinarily limited, and I implore the CDC to act now and allow summer camps to reopen to full activities without the wearing of masks.

CHILD TAX CREDIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I was proud to vote for the American Rescue Plan because I knew it was the transformational investment we needed to get the pandemic under control and our economy back on track.

Two months later, it is clear the investment has paid off. We have gotten more shots in arms, lifted families out of poverty, helped children get back to school, helped businesses stay open, and helped workers keep their jobs. And we are just getting started.

Much of the vital support for workers and families included in the American Rescue Plan is still underway. One of these measures is the expansion of the child tax credit, a historic investment in the future of our country.

It has become harder and harder to afford a college education, a home, and childcare.

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As the cost of living continues to soar and wages continue to stagnate, the American Dream is slipping out of reach for many working families. We need to level the playing field so every child has the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

The child tax credit expansion means working-class families will get \$300 per child under 6, and \$250 per child for children aged 7–17. \$300 a month helps put food on the table so kids do not go hungry. It helps pay for child care so parents can get back to work and build a better life for their families. And it helps cover healthcare expenses so children stay healthy.

This lifeline benefits a whopping 85 percent of the children in my district on the central coast of California. That means a stronger economic foundation for over 135,000 children in our community. For the 11,200 children in my community living in poverty, the child tax credit could make all the difference in their lives and their futures.

I come from a low-income family myself, a working-class family, so I know that \$300 a month would have lifted a financial burden off my parents' shoulders, who already worked so hard to give me and my siblings a chance for a better life.

Advance monthly payments of the child tax credit will start to be sent out in July and last through December 2021. Families will get the remaining tax credit when they file their 2021 tax returns. Families can make sure they get an accurate payment quickly by filing their 2020 tax return as soon as possible.

Even individuals who lost their jobs during the pandemic or do not normally file taxes, should file this year to receive the credit. The IRS needs the information from the tax returns to calculate and issue the monthly child tax credit payments.

I will continue to fight for working families in Congress so they keep their hard-earned money in their pockets, and every child has the means to achieve the American Dream.

NYPD SERVES EVEN THROUGH TURMOIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during National Police Week to thank and show support for our police officers, particularly the New York Police Department, and also warn my colleagues of what happens when politicians think that they know how to do the job in the street better than our cops do because I have seen it happen in New York City. I have seen the quality of life deteriorate, I have seen crime skyrocket, and we must learn from what has happened here to not make this mistake and adopt those very policies on the Federal level.

This past weekend, we saw three innocent bystanders, one of whom was a 4-year-old child, shot in broad daylight in the middle of Times Square. Fortunately, NYPD Officer Alyssa Vogel was there. She sprinted into action to save these individuals' lives. That is what this mother was doing Mother's Day weekend, and we thank her for her heroic efforts.

Sadly, we also lost a police officer, Anastasios Tsakos, who was in Queens directing traffic in the middle of the night after there was a car accident, and he was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver who was under the influence and operating an unlicensed vehicle.

Sadly, this is what our police officers do each and every day, put their lives at risk, sometimes giving up their life to protect the rest of us.

All through the pandemic, we praised them as heroes for working the front line. COVID was the leading cause of death for our police officers in 2020. We lost eight NYPD officers, sadly. Also, as we approach the 20th anniversary of 9/11, let's not forget the sacrifices of our police officers, not only on that day, but in the days since. We continue to lose people to 9/11-related illnesses. In the NYPD's case, they lost seven since January 2020.

Mr. Speaker, in New York City, we have seen policies that have hurt our law enforcement officers. How did we get here? Well, decriminalizing quality-of-life crimes, which was something I warned in 2017 that would lead to crimes skyrocketing. The broken windows theory is real.

Then you add the State legislature's attempts to reform bail, the rush to close Rikers Island, emptying the jails, putting dangerous criminals with lengthy rap sheets back onto our streets.

The Governor's Parole Board has released over 16 cop killers and other

murderers and rapists, once again putting people who are dangerous back on our streets; eliminated the NYPD plainclothes unit, tying the hands of our police; and then lastly, cutting \$1 billion, one-sixth of the NYPD budget.

As I mentioned, the 4-year-old girl who was shot this weekend, she was just one of 43 individuals shot in the last week, 169 percent increase over the same period last year. There were nine murders last week in New York City, up 350 percent over the same period last year.

But the trend is not just starting now. It is not just the result of defunding the police. It is the other policies, as I have mentioned. Homicides in 2020 soared 45 percent, shootings doubled, with 1,868 people shot in 2020, up from 923 in 2019. This is a result of an abdication of responsibility from my colleagues on the city and State level.

Now they want to take away the qualified immunity from our police officers, something that many of you voted to do here for our Federal law enforcement officers, despite when they already give up their immunity if they are not operating within the NYPD guidelines, or if they violate someone's constitutional rights.

There is no question that the demoralization of law enforcement over the past year has contributed to a sharp rise in departures from the NYPD, which are up 75 percent compared to 2019, with the lowest number of NYPD officers in uniform in over a decade, when we have all this rising crime taking place across our city. It is absolutely disgraceful, Mr. Speaker, and it must end now.

City and State have a responsibility to keep the public safe. Quite frankly, if they are not going to do it, if my mayor and my Governor continue to tie the hands of our police officers and not allow them to do their job, then we need the Federal Government to step in. Send DOJ, ATF, FBI, DEA, and the U.S. Marshals, because we have a responsibility to the citizens of our city and Nation to keep them safe.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ARE DEDICATED HEROES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate National Police Week, it is important that we remember the innumerable sacrifices that are made every day by the men and women of law enforcement.

In communities across America, they serve as the gatekeepers of law and order. Even as the far left calls for defunding the police, these dedicated heroes will not hesitate when called upon to serve.

I believe that their hard work should be recognized every day because, without them, law and order would cease to exist and criminality would reign.